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ABSTRACT

In this lesson, student teams role-play as real estate agents who have been contacted by an art collector about purchasing a large historic landmark in which to house an art collection. Teams will research an historical site and prepare a creative sales presentation. Students are provided with background information, detailed instructions, on-line resources, and reflection questions. The teacher's notes describe the unit's purpose and suggest teaching strategies. (BB)

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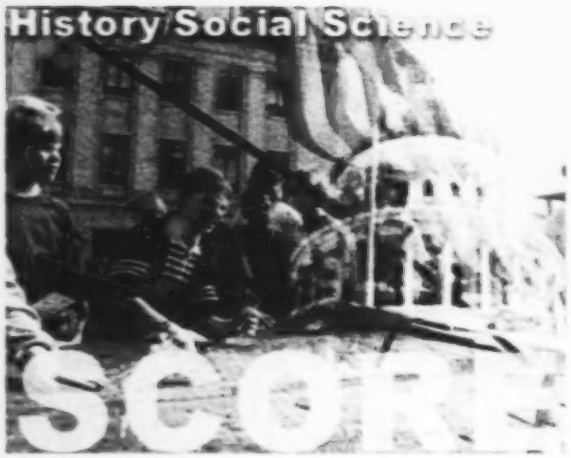

Schools of California Online Resources for Education (SCORE): Connecting California's Classrooms to the World

The Selling of the Taj Mahal or Osaka Castle

7th Grade Lesson by Bill Dyer

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Margaret Hill

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The Selling of the Taj Mahal or Osaka Castle

Don Diego is a multibillionaire businessman who has a large collection of historical artwork. His lawyers recently sent notices to the major real estate companies worldwide outlining Mr. Diego's desire to purchase a large historical landmark to house his large art collection and a vacation getaway for Mr. Diego and his family. As one of the many real estate companies who have received this information, it is your group's job to read the enclosed notice, discuss it within your group, meet the given timeline, and make a creative sales presentation to Mr. Diego.

Handouts

- Download the Diego World Enterprises letter to realtors around the world. (PICT format)

The Task

As your group selects your historical site which you'll try to sell to Mr. Diego, your group should keep in mind the following questions:

- Is this historic site liveable?
- Could you build a model of the site?
- Do any major governmental or economic problems exist in the country of your site?
- Does this site have vacation destination possibilities?
- Would you consider living at this site?

Examples of Historic Sites:

- a specific castle, ie. Osaka Castle or Windsor Castle
- Taj Mahal
- a specific cathedral, shrine, or mosque ie. Notre Dame in Paris or St. Basil in Moscow
- part of the Great Wall of China
- Mayan or Aztec Temple
- Machu Picchu
- The Forbidden City
- Great Zimbabwe

After you have selected the historical site, read the timeline that your real estate company must meet.

The Process

To accomplish the project, your group needs to answer the following questions.

- Where exactly is your historical site located? Provide a detailed map.
- Describe the geography of the surrounding area. Include the land, climate, people, and culture.
- What are the average weather conditions during the different seasons?
- What type of living conditions exist at your site?
- How far is it to the nearest international airport?
- What types of leisure activities and modern conveniences exist at this site or nearby area?
- What other factors might be important to consider?
- Why did you select this site ? Would you live at this site?
- Locate/collect photos or diagrams of your site.

As you work on these questions or other related task, your company needs to remember to follow the timeline and begin to prepare your sales presentation for Mr. Diego. Be creative and do not forget to include in your presentation colorful charts, pictures, graphs, and a miniature model of your site if you wish your site to be selected over your competitors.

Resources

There are numerous resources on the Internet related to different historical places past and present. The Internet also has important resources on different countries world wide.

Examples of Internet Resources:

The SCORE site offers a wide variety of resources (http://www.rims.k12.ca.us/SCORE/)

The Castles on the Web site is an index for castles
(http://fox.nstn.ca/~tmonk/castle/castle.html)

The Great Wall of China site has great photos of the wall.
(http://www.net.edu.cn/beijing/GreatWall.html)

The Excite Travel site is a great place to start your site investigation.
(http://www.vtourist.com/vt/)

Examples of Other Resources:

World Atlas
Encyclopedia
World Almanac
Travel Agent

Learning Advice

To complete your task you will be working on this project as a member of a team, so you will need to share the tasks and responsibilities by working together, helping each other whenever you can, and using each others talents. All members should be involved in the presentation process.

Evaluation

Evaluation of this project is based on the quality of your research, graphs/charts, miniature model, and the creativity of your group's presentation. Your group should have addressed as many of the given questions as possible.

Reflection

Looking over the whole process your group used to select your historical site and create your groups presentation, are there any changes you would make if you had to do it all over ?

1. Describe the process your group used to complete this project.
2. What component of the project helped you learn the most ?
3. If you could change any part of the project what would it be ? Explain.

Conclusion

After listening to all the presentation made by the different real estate companies, which sites had the most interesting characteristics and which seemed to be the most persuasive ? Did you agree with the choice Mr. Diego made ? Why or why not ?

Teacher Notes

Grade level/Unit: Grade 7 Medieval Japan and Europe.
This project also could be used to bring closure to the school year or to see what students already know about history at the start of the year.

Goals/Purpose: The main goal of this project is for students to work collaboratively together in groups, come to consensus when needed, and create and present a creative presentation. Furthermore, this project has students as young historians investigating the historical past and connecting the past with the present.

Length: 8 to 12 hours

Materials: Poster paper, markers, colored pencils, rulers, scissors, and glue.

Interdisciplinary Connection: This project could tie into the four major disciplines very easily. The history teacher could introduce the project, provide research time either at the library or in the classroom, and help students create the group presentations. The English teacher could teach students how to write a business letter and help students with the writing process for their group's letters and presentation. The math teacher could teach students how to create different types of graphs/charts and then help students create graphs/charts for their presentation. The science teacher could help the students research the geography, climate, and weather related questions of the project.

Adaptations for Special Needs: The groups should be created with the different learning abilities and learning styles of the students in mind.

Name: Bill Dyer

District: Rialto Unified School District

Diego Worldwide Enterprises

TO: Realtors from around the world,

Within the next two months, I plan to make a very large real estate purchase. It is my desire to buy a historical landmark to either live in or to use as a vacation home. I'm very interested in a location which has a mild climate some time during the year and a place where there are many recreational activities. If your company is interested in competing for my business, you will need to meet the timeline that is enclosed.

Good luck.

Sincerely,

Don Diego

P.S. Think! Cost is not a problem. The sky is the limit!

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The Timeline

Your real estate company must accomplish the following by the given dates to be considered:

- Send a Letter of Intent to our office on your company's letterhead within one week of receiving my letter. In this Letter of Intent please include the names of all members of your company and the name of the site you will be presenting to avoid any companies having the same site.

- Within two weeks after you have sent your Letter of Intent, send documentation to our office summarizing the progress you have made on your project. Once we receive all letters of documentation outlining the progress the different real estate companies have made, we will notify you regarding the date your group will be making your presentation to Mr. Diego.

- Be ready to present your sales proposal on the given day, approximately 4 to 6 weeks from now.

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